



## Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks News Release

**For Immediate Release:** June 21, 2011

**Contact:** Dana M. Dierkes

**Phone Number:** (559) 565-3131 (desk) or 559-679-2866 (cell)

### **The National Park Service Extends Public Comment Period for the Proposed Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep Research and Recovery Actions in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks**

The public comment period for the environmental assessment for the proposed Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis sierrae*) research and recovery actions at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks has been extended to **July 21, 2011**. The extension is because the U.S. Forest Service, which is a cooperating agency in implementing this proposal, requires legal notice to be published to satisfy their compliance requirements. This notice, published today, requires a 30-day public review period. Therefore, the National Park Service is extending the public review timeline.

The proposal includes projects that would directly aid in planning and implementing actions identified, as necessary, to enable the recovery of this endangered species. Proposed project activities, including helicopter-supported capture of bighorn sheep with net guns, would be conducted primarily in wilderness areas of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and on adjoining Inyo National Forest (Inyo NF) lands. (*Note:* Table 2 in the environmental assessment estimates bighorn sheep research/monitoring captures, helicopter landings, and helicopter days for both Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and the Inyo NF. These estimates are only for 2011-2012, the years in which data collected from bighorn sheep would be used for research to inform the Sequoia and Kings Canyon Wilderness Stewardship Plan. After 2012, bighorn sheep may continue to be captured on the Inyo NF at the same rates, but these captures will be analyzed separately as part of an Inyo NF environmental assessment expected to be released later this summer.)

The environmental assessment evaluates four alternatives, including no action, and the associated environmental impacts from implementing the proposed project. To obtain additional information about the proposed project, visit the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/seki>. **All public comments must be received by July 21, 2011.**

Public comments may be submitted via the PEPC website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/seki>. In addition, you may direct comments regarding this project to the park in writing by either hand-delivering or mailing your comments to:

Superintendent

*Attn: Bighorn Sheep EA*

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

47050 Generals Highway

Three Rivers, CA 93271

Public comments, including personal identifying information (name, address, phone number, e-mail address, etc.) may be made available to the public at any time. Even if a commenter requests to have personal identifying information withheld, the NPS cannot guarantee this will be done. The NPS will always make submissions from organizations or businesses available from individuals identifying themselves as representatives of or officials of organizations or businesses available for public inspection in their entirety. *Anonymous comments will not be accepted.*

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## **ABOUT SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS**

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, which lie side-by-side in the southern Sierra Nevada Mountains in central California, serve as a prime example of nature's size, beauty, and diversity. With the world's largest trees (by volume), grand mountains, rugged foothills, deep canyons, vast caverns, and the highest point in the lower 48 states, it is a place that attracts 1.6 million visitors a year from across the U.S. and the world. Visitor activities vary by season and elevation.